ACCOUNTS OF 1115

I am happy to state that the actual surplus of last year, *i.e.*, 1115, was very much better than what we had expected. As is pointed out in the explanatory memorandum of the Finance Member, it has amounted to Rs. 10·77 lakhs, although the budget forecast was Rs. 5·06 lakhs, and the anticipation, according to the revised budget, was Rs. 7·87 lakhs. It is proposed to transfer a sum of Rs. 8 lakhs from this to the Revenue Reserve Fund.

REVISED ESTIMATE FOR 1116 M. E.

In the current year, our receipts were estimated at Rs. 114·50 lakhs and our expenditure at Rs. 108·97 lakhs. The revised estimates, however, stand at Rs. 120·23 lakhs and Rs. 111·67 lakhs, receipts and expenditure, respectively. The reasons for the variations have been clearly explained in the Finance Member's memorandum, and I do not want to repeat them here. All that I would like to do is to draw the attention of the Honourable Members to the fact that, if we deduct the two exceptional items of expenditure, namely, Rs. ·91 lakh under the Air Raid Precautions defence measures and incidental arrangements, and a further sum of Rs. 1·50 lakhs towards cyclone relief measures, the revised budget figure for expenditure would only be Rs. 109·26 lakhs. The fact that there is thus only a very slight variation in expenditure as between the original and the revised budget estimates is, I venture to submit, a clear proof of the rigid supervision and control exercised by Government over expenditure in all departments of activity.

COCHIN PORT

A word about the port and the harbour railway before I pass on to the figures for 1117. During the year ending 31st March, 1941, the major works connected with the fourth stage of development of the harbour were finished. The building of the civil aerodrome at Willingdon Island, which was entrusted to the port's agency, was begun during the year, and satisfactory progress has been made. The harbour railway was opened for passenger traffic from 1st October, 1940. The new passenger berth, to which reference was made in the last year's budget speech, was used for the first time in November 1940, and the passengers landed direct from the steamer on to a floating stage connected by a floating gangway to the shore. It was an interesting coincidence that among the passengers who landed on 29th November, 1940, was Sir Albion Banerjee, a distinguished Diwan of the State who had played a prominent part in the early stages of the development of the harbour.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

The general trade of the port during the year showed a decrease in the tonnage of cargo handled. The total tonnage of imports and exports, which amounted to 779,000 tons, was 173,000 tons, or 18 per cent, less than that of the previous year. In imports of all classes of goods, which totalled 524,000 tons, there was a decrease of 22·85 per cent, while outward cargo showed a general decline of 6·4 per cent. The reduced volume of the import trade and the decrease in the tonnage of shipping arrivals have substantially reduced the port's revenue. The curtailment of the port's normal peace-time trade is, to a large extent, inevitable owing to the war. Markets on the Continent of Europe, normally available, have been lost. The demands on shipping and shipping space for war purposes are heavy, and they naturally have to be given preference over shipping and space for ordinary business. The income of the port for the year registered, in consequence of all these, a fall from the amount anticipated in the estimates for the year. The deficit on the year's working is approximately one lakh of rupees. The incidence of diminished exports and imports necessitated careful consideration of the port's financial position, and the port authorities have, albeit with some degree of reluctance, arrived at the decision to increase the port charges. The increase in the case of Landing and Shipping fees on goods will be 25 per cent, that of Port dues on vessels $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent, and that of Pilotage dues on vessels 50 per cent. The increase has come into effect from 21st July, 1941. It is hoped by those who are responsible for the administration of the port that, with the increased revenue resulting from enhanced port charges, as well as by the exercise of all possible economies on the expenditure side, equilibrium between receipts and expenditure will be established.

STATE RAILWAY

The net earnings to the Cochin Government from the State Railway during the current year amount to Rs. 6,34,609 as against Rs. 4,66,152 in the year 1115. The increase is due partly to the opening of the railway extension and partly to the arrears of coal rebate received from the company for the seven years from 1933 to 1940. The sum so received was Rs. 42,904. The average capital investment on the State Railway for the half-year ended March 1941 was Rs. 117 lakhs. The net earnings expected in the 1117 budget is Rs. 6,10,000. The forecast is based on the figures furnished by the Railway Company and on the experience of the previous years.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly